

January 2009

RE: EDEExpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 1.0

Dear EDEExpress Users:

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of EDEExpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 1.0. Release 1.0 is the initial EDEExpress software release for the 2009-2010 award cycle and includes the Application Processing and Packaging modules, and Global functionality (such as Security setup, Document Tracking, and User Database).

This letter includes the following information:

- An overview of EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0
- A list of 2009-2010 enhancements available in Release 1.0
- Results gathered from EDEExpress benchmark testing
- Reminders on backing up and optimizing your EDEExpress database

Important Note for Packaging Users: See the section “Federal Pell Grant and Direct Loan Award Limits in Release 1.0 Packaging” later in this guide for important information regarding the Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) and William D. Ford Direct Loan (Direct Loan) award limits in the EDEExpress 2009-2010 Release 1.0 Packaging module.

How to Get the Software and Documentation

You can download Release 1.0 and related user documentation from the U.S. Department of Education’s Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Instructions for downloading EDEExpress are located in the “Downloading Documentation and Software from the FSAdownload Web Site” section of the *2009-2010 Installation Guide for EDEExpress for Windows*.

Note: Some organizations restrict their employees from downloading programs from Internet sites. If you have trouble downloading, contact your technical support staff to ensure that you have full download rights.

If You Have Technical Support Questions

If you have questions regarding EDEExpress installation or functionality, have trouble accessing the FSAdownload Web site, or require other technical assistance, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support.

You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. (ET), at **800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806)**. You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to CPSSAIG@ed.gov. A representative will respond within one business day.

You can also post questions regarding EDEExpress on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information on subscribing to FSATECH, go to ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html.

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EDExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0

EDExpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 1.0 consists of two software modules:

- Application Processing
- Packaging

In addition, Global functionality applicable to all modules, such as Security setup, Document Tracking, and User Database setup and entry, is added during any installation of EDExpress.

EDExpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 2.0 (scheduled for release in late March 2009) adds the Federal Pell Grant (including Academic Competitiveness Grant, or ACG, and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant, or National SMART Grant), Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant, or TEACH Grant, and William D. Ford Direct Loan (Direct Loan) modules.

Release 1.0 does not overwrite your EDExpress 2008-2009 database; instead, it creates a new database.

Federal Pell Grant and Direct Loan Award Limits in Release 1.0 Packaging

At this time the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriation has not been approved. Therefore, the 2009-2010 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedule used by the Release 1.0 Packaging module is based on the current \$4,731 maximum Pell Grant award. After ED's Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriation is finalized, we will update the Pell Grant Payment Schedule, if necessary, through a future release of EDExpress. If you use the EDExpress Packaging module to award Pell Grants, you may want to wait until it is known if the Pell Payment Schedule changes.

Also, during 2009-2010, we will implement changes to EDExpress to accommodate provisions of the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act of 2008 (ECASLA), Pub. L. 110-227. This includes the implementation of revised Direct Loan award limits in the EDExpress 2009-2010 Packaging and Direct Loan modules and revised eligibility rules for the Academic Competitiveness Grant (or ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (or National SMART Grant) programs in the Federal Pell Grant (or Pell Grant) module. **Note:** The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA), Pub. L. 110-35, changed the effective date for implementation of the revised ACG and National SMART Grant eligibility rules from the 2008-2009 award year to the 2009-2010 award year.

All ECASLA-related changes will be implemented in EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 2.0, scheduled for release in late March 2009. Packaging functionality in EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0, calculates subsidized and unsubsidized loan awards (aid types **S**, **U**, and **D**) according to the loan limits defined prior to the enactment of the ECASLA.

EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0, Packaging users can manually adjust subsidized and unsubsidized Direct Loan awards to the increased loan limits defined by the ECASLA. This can be accomplished by increasing loan award amount(s) on the Awarded Funds dialog box (accessible from the Awards tab within a student record) or by importing an external Add Funds file.

Alternatively, you can run the Repackage process (by clicking **Process, Repackage** from the main EDEExpress menu or from a student's Awards tab) after installing Release 2.0 to adjust the loan awards on your packaging records to ECASLA limits. Be aware that repackaging records in Release 2.0 may result in different award packages for your students (due to increased loan awards) than they receive when packaged in Release 1.0, depending on your Packaging setup.

Microsoft Windows Vista Test Results

We tested Microsoft Windows Vista as an operating system for our EDESuite PC products earlier this year. EDEExpress 2009-2010 includes modifications that will allow you to install and run it on Vista workstations.

For more information on our Vista testing results and the issues we discovered, see the [September 18, 2008 electronic announcement](#) posted to Federal Student Aid's Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, located at ifap.ed.gov.

Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, all EDESuite PC products are compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired. Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in EDESuite software entry fields or directly read the contents of software grid cells. To accommodate these restrictions, EDESuite software includes the following features:

- All software fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates the field is required.
- All software fields that are shaded blue after a previously saved value has been modified also display a “-C” after the software label. The “-C” text indicates the field has been changed.
- All software grids display “floating” text descriptions of the contents of grid cells when cells are selected. The text appears one cell above (or below, if the first cell is selected) the selected cell. The text lists Row number, Column title, and (if applicable) the current Value.

For more information on EDEExpress functionality related to Section 508, see the help topic “Enable 508 Grid Functionality?” in EDEExpress 2009-2010.

Product Enhancements

The following product enhancements have been incorporated into EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0.

General

- **Updated Cycle References and Message Classes** – We updated software labels, online help, reports, and other functionality throughout EDEExpress to reference the 2009-2010 cycle. Message classes with cycle indicators are also updated for 2009-2010 in File Management (**Tools, Setup, Global, File Management**) and in various Import and Export dialog boxes throughout EDEExpress.

Note: For more information regarding message classes used by the CPS in 2009-2010, see the Processing Codes section of the *2009-2010 EDE Technical Reference*, available on the FSAdownload Web site at fsadownload.ed.gov.

- **Updated EDEExpress Icon and Splash Screen Color to Match 2009-2010 FAFSA** – The EDEExpress software’s Windows icon and splash screen (which displays when you first start the software in Windows) have been color-coded green to match the 2009-2010 FAFSA form.
- **Updated HERA Overview and TEACH Grant Help Topics** – We updated help topics available in Global, Application Processing, Packaging, and Query online help for 2009-2010 that provide detailed information and guidance on EDEExpress changes related to the HERA and the TEACH Grant. The topics are titled “Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG),” “National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant,” “Graduate and Professional Student PLUS Loan (Grad PLUS),” “Other HERA Changes Overview,” and “Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant (TEACH Grant).” You can access the topics by clicking **Help, Help Topics** from the EDEExpress menu bar, selecting the **Index** tab, and typing the name of the topic you want to view.

Global

The following enhancements have been made to EDEExpress 2009-2010 Global functionality (applicable to all EDEExpress releases).

ED-Initiated Import

- **Updated ED-Initiated Import Message Class for ACG Data File** – The 2009-2010 version of the ACG Data File (message class ED2010OP) can be imported and printed using the EDEExpress Global ED Initiated import function.

The ACG Data File contains ACG student self-identification data entered on FAFSA on the Web or FAA Access to CPS Online, or by calling the FSAIC, and can be used as part of eligibility determination and verification procedures. The report is print-only, and the data is not stored in the EDEExpress database. You must define the ACG Data File message class in **Tools, Setup, Global, ED Initiated Imports** before you can import ACG Data Files you have received. A record layout for the ACG Data File is available in the Record Layouts section of the *2009-2010 Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) Technical Reference*, available on the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Note: Due to a limitation in the number of comment codes that can be assigned to a given ISIR transaction, ACG-related comment codes may not always appear on the ISIR for ACG-eligible students. Be sure to check ACG Data Files (ED2010OP) for additional ACG eligibility information.

- **TEACH Grant Setup and Queries Added to Prior Year Import** – We updated the Prior Year import process to pull TEACH Grant setup parameters and queries from the EDEExpress 2008-2009 database into EDEExpress 2009-2010, reducing user entry time. In EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0, you can pull forward Global Security Groups and File Management setup with TEACH Grant-specific settings, as well as the TEACH Grant fund code in Packaging Fund Maintenance.

Reports

- **SSN Masking Implemented for Document Tracking and User-Defined Letters** – For increased security, EDEExpress now masks the first five digits of students' SSNs with Xs and displays only the last four digits (such as XXXXX9999) on Document Tracking and User-Defined Letters.

Application Processing

The following enhancements have been made to the EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0 Application Processing module.

ISIR View, Print, and Query

- **New and Modified ISIR Fields Available** – New and modified data elements on the 2009-2010 ISIR print on the EDEExpress ISIR report, appear on the ISIR Review tab and Apps Browse grid, and are available for selection in App Express File Format and Query setup.

Note: See the *2009-2010 ISIR Guide*, available at fsadownload.ed.gov, for more detailed information on changes to the ISIR for 2009-2010.

NSLDS View and Print

- **New TEACH Grant NSLDS Data Elements on ISIR Record** – New NSLDS data elements for the TEACH Grant are included in the 2009-2010 ISIR record. NSLDS data elements included in the ISIR record can be viewed in EDEExpress from a student's record (**View, NSLDS**) or printed on the NSLDS report (**File, Print, App Express, NSLDS**).

Note: See the *2009-2010 Summary of Changes for the Application Processing System* guide, available at fsadownload.ed.gov, for more detailed information on changes to NSLDS information for 2009-2010.

Packaging

The following enhancements have been made to the EDEExpress 2009-2010, Release 1.0 Application Processing module.

Setup, Entry, Import, and Query

- **Housing Plans Values Updated** – To match the changes to the Housing Plans field on the 2009-2010 ISIR, we reordered the values available for selection for the Default Housing Plans field in Packaging System setup (**Tools, Setup, Packaging, System**). We also updated the values for the Housing Plans field on the Awards tab, in Packaging Multiple Entry and Query, and for the Housing Plans field in the Packaging Import External Add and Change record layout. The new field order and values are: **1** – On Campus, **2** – With Parent, and **3** – Off Campus (**3** is the default for Packaging System setup).

Note: If you perform a Prior Year import of Packaging System setup parameters from your EDEExpress 2008-2009 database into EDEExpress 2009-2010, be sure to verify the value pulled forward for the Default Housing Plans field is still appropriate given the new field order and values for the Housing Plans field. The Prior Year import process does not automatically convert the 2008-2009 value for this field to its 2009-2010 equivalent.

Note: For more detailed information on the revisions to the Packaging Import External Add and Change record layout for this change, see the *2009-2010 EDEExpress Packaging Technical Reference*, available at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Reports

- **SSN Masking Implemented for Award Letters** – For increased security, EDEExpress now masks the first five digits of students' SSNs with Xs and displays only the last four digits (such as XXXXX9999) on the Offer and Notification versions of award letters and the missing document letter.

Enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online

Before using the EDEExpress interface with the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site, the Destination Point Administrator (DPA) should verify enrollment is completed for FAA Access to CPS Online Web site services. The DPA should ensure during this process that individual users at your school performing FAFSA or ISIR correction data entry tasks are enrolled for these services.

Note: Your DPA must also enroll individual users at your school for access to the Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) and ISIR Analysis Tool Web sites, which are part of FAA Access to CPS Online. After enrollment is complete, users can access these products from the EDEExpress View menu.

Enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online, R2T4 on the Web, and the ISIR Analysis Tool is accomplished through the SAIG Enrollment Web site, located at fsawebenroll.ed.gov.

2009-2010 EDE and EDEExpress Packaging Technical References

The 2009-2010 versions of the *Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) Technical Reference* and the *EDEExpress Packaging Technical Reference* provide technical guidance and record layouts for schools or other organizations that need to interface local software or mainframe systems with EDEExpress 2009-2010. The *EDEExpress Packaging Technical Reference* also contains worksheets you can use to help plan and implement your Packaging module setup in EDEExpress 2009-2010.

The most recent versions of the technical references can be downloaded from the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

EDEExpress Benchmarking

We performed benchmarking tests on the EDEExpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 1.0 software to determine how it operates in certain operating environments. These tests were all completed on a Pentium 1000 MHz with 512 MB RAM.

Imports

The benchmarking results for EDEExpress import files are as follows:

- Records were imported into an empty database.
- The Benchmarking Volume is the type and number of records that were imported in the test.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the Import dialog box to begin the import process until the import statistics are displayed.

Imports

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
ISIR Data	Windows 2000	1000 records	42 seconds
	Windows XP	1000 records	38 seconds

Reports

The benchmarking results for EDEExpress reports and lists are as follows:

- The Benchmarking Volume is the number of records or approximate number of pages that were printed in the test.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the length of time starting when the user clicks OK in the EDEExpress Print dialog box through the time the operating system's Print dialog box displays.

Reports

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
Document Tracking Letter	Windows 2000	5 records	1 second
	Windows XP	5 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows 2000	25 records	1 second
	Windows XP	25 records	1 second
ISIR	Windows 2000	5 records	4 seconds
	Windows XP	5 records	3 seconds
List-Processed ISIRs	Windows 2000	25 records	1 second
	Windows XP	25 records	1 second
Award Letters	Windows 2000	5 records	1 second
	Windows XP	5 records	1 second
Packaging Setup	Windows 2000	16 pages	1 second
	Windows XP	16 pages	1 second

Reminders

Back Up Your Database Regularly

You should back up your EDEExpress database file (**expres90.mdb**) regularly so you do not lose your data. We recommend that you back up your files after each major update to your database (for example, after updating a large group of student records), or at least once a week. You should also back up your data before and after you run the software utilities as a precautionary measure.

EDEExpress does not include a backup utility. You must use your own backup system. Be sure to test your backup system regularly to verify that you can reliably restore your database.

Optimize Your Database with Software Utilities

EDEExpress contains utilities enabling you to optimize your database to prevent problems. We recommend that you run the Compact and Repair Database and Verify Database utilities at least once a week. Be sure to create a backup of your database before and after running these utilities.

Run the software utilities in the following order:

- Compact and Repair Database
- Verify Database
- Compact and Repair Database

Run the Compact and Repair Database Utility

The Compact and Repair Database utility resolves inconsistencies in record storage and improves the performance of the EDEExpress database. Running this utility at least once a week helps to prevent database problems.

Events such as a power outage or a Local Area Network (LAN) failure can corrupt your database if it occurs while users are logged into EDEExpress. If your system functions unpredictably (for example, you start getting database error messages), run the Compact and Repair Database utility.

Running the Compact and Repair Database utility on a regular basis can make your database significantly smaller and improve EDEExpress' performance. The utility reduces the size of your database by organizing and storing records more efficiently and removes records flagged for deletion.

Warning: Before using the Compact and Repair Database utility, be sure you have space on your hard drive or LAN folder that is at least three times the current size of your EDEExpress database. You should also ensure all other users are logged out of EDEExpress before running the Compact and Repair Database utility.

Run the Verify Database Utility

Each student record in EDEExpress has multiple parts that are stored in different database tables. The Verify Database utility checks the integrity of relationships between these tables. If EDEExpress shuts down due to a program error or halts abnormally while you are processing data, links between various parts of a record may become damaged.

Verify Database repairs these damaged links within the database.

You should always run the Compact and Repair Database utility before and after running the Verify Database utility. Running this utility at least once a week is recommended as part of your preventative maintenance routine.

Warning: Before using the Verify Database utility, ensure you have hard drive or LAN folder space available equal to at least three times the current size of your EDEExpress database. You should also ensure all other users are logged out of EDEExpress before running the Verify Database utility.